

cover

F E A T H E R S

A T A L E

T H E

V E N U S S U R P A S S E D

F E A T H E R S

B E A U T Y O F G R O S S E R N O R

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THE
F E A T H E R S,
A T A L E;

O R,

VENUS SURPASSED

B Y A

BEAUTY IN GROSVENOR SQUARE.

INSCRIBED TO

A CERTAIN FAIR PLUMED DUTCHESS.

SUM PLUMOSA DEA.

You'll see the Fair, where'er you go,
Tho' taper and thin as a lath, Sir,
With Feathers nodding to and fro',
Like plumed Knights of the Bath, Sir.—

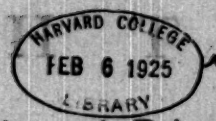
L O N D O N:

Printed for S. BLADON, No. 16, Paternoster Row, and sold at the West End of the Town.

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*Gift of the Division
of
Modern Languages*

VENUS SURPASSED

BY A

BEAUTY IN GROSVENOR SQUARE

INSCRIBED TO

A CERTAIN FAIR PLUMED DETACHEE

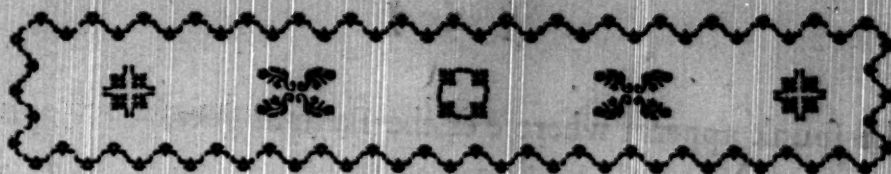
THE LONDON

You, like the Fair, whose name you go
The, eyes and lips as a light, so
With London's morning and night,
The, heart's desire of a light, so

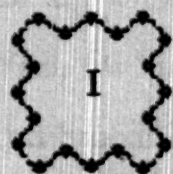
L O N D O N

Printed by the University Press, Cambridge

1925



T H E
F E A T H E R S
A T A L E.



N JAVA's Island on the China seas,
Bantam, or Lilliput, or what you please,
Boasts of a tiny, fairy race of men,
And eke the little cock and little hen :
But then, this little hen and little cock,
Spring from an ancient and a mettled stock.
Gallant and gay the cock he leads the train,
And crows, and flaps his wings and crows again :

B

The

The spunk appears where e'er the Bantam goes,
Who wears his feathers to his very toes.
He struts, he cocks his tail and shakes his crest,
Spreads out his painted wings, and shews his golden breast.
These range at large and pick the various feed,
And blest with liberty luxurious feed.
Not so the case of those fair fav'rite hens,
Cribb'd, cabbin'd and confin'd in narrow pens;
Where all their pretty plumage soon is spoil'd,
Unforted, unanointed and unoil'd.
Their feathers ruffled, pale's the rosy comb,
Without the garish fun, no beauties bloom:
Beast, fish, and birds the glorious truth approve,
The bliss of earth is liberty and love.

There is a feather'd rule of Turkish fort,
One cock's allow'd with seven hens to sport:

Large

Large the allowance be they great or small,
 One little cock, — ye cocks ! to feather all !
 Alas ! poor cock—reply'd a neighbouring swain,
 Alas ! poor hens,—a maid repeats again !

But custom's all in this or other land,
 The cocks obey the hens in all command.
 But can the hens command an old Cock-Turk,
 Eat up with sloth, to do his daily work ?
 Who, for his rouncy rump leaves walk and food,
 And brooding keeps his perch in sulky mood :
 Ne'er moves his head to shew his turband crest,
 Nor to the sun displays his burnish'd breast :
 Ne'er seeks the grain to please dame Partlet's lip,
 But droops his feathers, and declares the pip.
 In such a case, shall not these beauteous hens,
 Break all restraints of tethers, roosts, and pens,

Lift

Lift to the voice of neighbouring Chanticleer,
 And spread their silver plumage without fear :
 O'er highest walls advent'rous raise their wings,
 And feather with the nearest cock that sings ?
 " Encrease and multiply the prophet said ! "

What eggs bring chickens, and the cocks not tread !

It was an antient philosophic rule,
 Allow'd by all the masters of the school ;
 That human-nature more or less in all,
 Resembles the creation animal.
 But ladies, who eccentrically bound,
 O'er ev'ry doctrine moral, sage, or sound ;
 Are not content with looking like a jay,
 But they must dress as lightly and as gay :
 Nay, ev'ry tail, of ev'ry bird they rob,
 And with the lightest feathers wing the mob ;

Like

Like horses move in the funereal train;
 Beneath their plumes, and shake the plaited mane.
 Now, since to ornament the frolic fair,
 There's not one pretty bird whose rump's not bare;
 Do not the ladies more or less appear,
 Just like the birds whose various plumes they wear?
 The *wry-neck*, *wag-tail* yellow, white and grey,
 The *ruff*, the *reeve*, the *sparrow* and the *jay*;
 Do they not like the pretty *ring-doves* coo,
 And what the *cuckoo* only says,—make true?
 The *pin-tail*, *red-shank*, *red-start* and *egret*,
 Are closely copied by *miss Mol* and *Bet*.—
 We've 'mongst the belles the *ring-tail* and the *owl*,
 Something between a female and a fowl;
 We've *coddy-moddy* gulls, and *buzzards* too,
 Fair silver *geese*, and *parrots* green and blue:
Silk-tails and *red-poles* ev'ry where appear,
 And belles are *humming birds* in ev'ry ear.

Is it a wonder then, that they should dress,
Like those fair birds, whose names they all express!

What, in creations mighty various round,
Than beauteous birds, more beautiful is found?
The swan's majestick form once courted Jove,
To dress in silver white, and Leda * love:
When Juno o'er the thund'rer would prevail,
She wears the plumage of her peacock's tail:
Minerva too demands her fav'rite fowl,
And for a mark of wisdom bears the owl!
While beauteous Venus, mistress of the loves,
Yokes to her car the sparrows and the doves:
From these the pretty, painted Pagan dames,
To crests of feathers laid their ancient claims;
Thus with their wings they rose to Heav'n's abodes,
Or with their charms drew down the sternest Gods.

* When Leda the lovely grew weary of Man,
And Pasiphaë broke her strong Tether:
Though the last took a Bull—and the first lov'd a Swan,
It was all for the Sake of the Feather.

Such

Such was the ancient taste of classic dames,
 Whom few might know, should I recount their names:
 But yet, with all their elegance and grace,
 The first in fashion and the first in face,
 The heavenly Goddesses and women too,
 The *Ostrich* feather, *DUTCH*ESS, left to you:
 To beauteous thee, this plumage they resign'd,
 And though the last—the first of woman kind.
 Hail to the mystic feathers of the fair,
 Such as the *Devonshire* and *Seston* wear:
 Hail to the mystic feathers red, white, blue.
 Of beauteous *Bouverie*, and courteous *Crewe*;
 Hail to the mystic black from wing of raven,
 The contrast ornament of *Stanley*, *Craven*:
 And those more elegant than all the rest,
 Which stately nod o'er lively *Bosville*'s breast:
 And tho' for tender *Asgyl* some declare,
 Thour't not less elegant, if she's more fair.

Hail

Hail to the party robe each belle assumes,
 Each tempting goldfinch, and her fleecy plumes!
 Hence tulip hide thy variegated head,
 Thy white, green, yellow, purple, blue, and red;
 Thy various colours, are alas! undone,
 Feathers and wax-lights blacken thee and sun.

Ye little Gods! ye Goddesses of Iky,
 Who make up Lady Juno's rout on high;
 Come and attend our fashionable crouds,
 And velvet chairs prefer to cold, wet clouds!
 Thus, 'tis ungentlewoman-like to swim,
 And with a dish-clout damp the fatten limb:
 Here, here descend, cut entre-chats and capers,
 Nor pass eternity in clouds and vapours!
 To live in fog and mist must be a sin,
 And such a clime must raise the price of gin!

Come,

Come, come, to Grosvenor square, ye prudent few,
And Hebe be, sweet handmaid unto Ceres.

When first I paid my pleasing visit there,
The belles had search'd the earth, the woods, the air,
For fancy feathers to adorn the hair.

Warren a goddess mov'd beneath her plume,

And added dignity to ev'ry room :

So fine, so feather'd, furbelow'd and fair,

They seem'd a *menag'rie* of fowls most rare :

I gaz'd a while—and then their forms rever'd,

They all like birds of Paradise appear'd.

Sturtz and the Vernons seem'd amidst the croud,

Like angels lighted from some fleecy cloud ;

To soften, model, and refine our race,

And teach us—nature's worship—beauty's face.

Venus enrag'd to see such routs below,
 Leap'd naked from her bed as white as snow,
 And in a passion made this pettish vow.
 With me, presumptive shall these dare to vie,
 And match their charms with beauties of the sky:
 By Heav'n's in all the plumes of Jove I'll dress,
 Rip up his feather beds from east to west.
 His pillows too I'll scatter thro' the skies,
 Pluck Juno's bird, and scratch out Gany's eyes;
 Rob Merc'ry's head and foot, steal Mars's plume,
 And then defy the gay *Festino* room.
 I with their charms and plumage will be even,
 Of silver *Jersey* and the golden *Devon*;
 I'll have the longest feather of the throng,
 Though *Stormont* gave her one twelve inches long.
 As for the crimson *Archer* and Miss *West*,
 With them I'll soon quit score dress'd or undress'd,
 Although they truly paint the most, and best.

The Irish GRACES* too shall own my sway,
 And brilliant *Matthews* cross her turgid sea :
Newnham, though angel born, the men shall hate her,
 And *Stanley* make in vain a Fête Champetre !
Barrymore's lips, and *Craven's* heavenly smile,
 Shall lose their pow'r, like G—l—r and A—r—g—e.
 Fret, scold, and scratch—lay all your heads together
 But Venus, girls, will have the longest feather.

Cupid, dear boy, go hence and yoke the doves,
 Call up the graces and the little loves :
 Then, with young Gany search the high abodes,
 And bring me all the feathers of the Gods !
 That o'er these dames your mother may prevail ;
 I'll be all feathers, son, from head to tail !
 Gany and Cupid pleas'd with this new Jest,
 Thro' Heav'n they stole the feathers of each nest.

And

* Lady Townsend and her two Sisters.

And when a *monstruous* bundle they had found,
Gany on *Cupid's* back the plumage bound.
 The God equip'd he darted thro' the air.
 The rendez-vous was *Crewe's* in Grosvenor Square.
 Whether elated with ideal joy,
 Or nectar had beguil'd the giddy boy;
 'Tis hard, and even hazardous to say,
 However, Master *Cupid* lost his way:
 Instead of coming as his mother said,
 The purblind urchin flew to *Bosville's* bed:
 Where like mamma, the heaven-born beauty laid,
 And undeceiv'd he watch'd the sleeping maid.
 Her rosy cheeks the downy pillow preßt,
 The sheet unkindly hid the fairer breast;
 Her hands alone were naked to the air,
 But who durst sleeping, spotless virtue bare?
 Where maiden chastity takes sweet repose,
 Whether beneath the forest or the clothes,

Her

Her honour's safe, for such is virtue's power,
 No Satyr dares approach the sacred flower ;
 Vice and pollution fly before he her breath,
 To them the hallow'd atmosphere is death.

Cupid deceiv'd by beauty fits and fings,
 Lolls in the elbow chair, and smoothes his rosy wings :
 And while mamma lies weary with her trip,
 The boy he meditates a truant slip ;
 Down stairs he marches, nor a soul regards,
 More than an unfleg'd ensign of the guards.
 The maiden wakes, she rings, she longs to speak,
 And shews the dream upon her crimson cheek :
 Betty comes in—the pleasing tale she tells,
 “ How she'll surpass in feathers all the belles !
 O madam, Betty cries, your dream is out,
 We've feathers for a funeral or a rout ;

All your admirers now, may be your Knights,
 And wear your plumes at *Windsor* and at *White's*
 You may surpass the damsels of the town,
 And have an Installation of your own.
 Here, madam here, look with your own bright eyes,
 At such a time, this is a glorious prize :
 When in this black and snowy, chilly weather,
 There's not a duck—or goose can keep a feather !
 Betty, she cries, as from her bed she springs,
 These are imperial plumes, and worthy kings.
 This night your mistress shall these feathers bear,
 And o'er her sex a Goddess she'll appear.
 At that, she cast her snowy robe aside,
 Nor Helen fairer, when the Trojan bride.
 As quick as thought with garments she is grac'd,
 And Venus, cestu's binds her taper waist.
 Upon her head the plumes compose a crest,
 And she at once a Goddess stands confest.

This

This may to human eyes a myst'ry seem,
 But Gods at pleasure realize a dream.
 A thousand sprights attend on maids and men,
 At once invifible to mortal ken :
 A thoufand faries wait the beauteous maid,
 And lead her forth in heavenly vefts array'd :
 At *Crewe's* ſhe moves with ev'ry Cyprian air,
 Confeſt by all the faireſt of the fair.
 Venus, unnotic'd mixes in the croud,
 And calls her little, naſty boy aloud.
 The boy diſcovers by his mother's face,
 His hapleſs error, and her ſad diſgrace.
 Whimp'ring he kneels, a little purblind rake,
 And begs her pardon for the ſad miſtake ;
 Sobbing, he cries, " Forgive, forgive me do ;
 Mother, indeed I took the maid for you :
 But left again I run on ſuch a ſhell,
 Pray make no more as handſome as yourſelf.

F I N I S.